

Chapter

6

New Program Approval

I. Introduction

Institutions seeking to begin a new program are required to submit a request to the VSBPE for a program approval visit to take place prior to admitting candidates into the new program. Accompanying this request should be a Design Document detailing the proposed program. A review of this document by the VTDOE and the VSBPE offers assurance that the program meets minimal requirements for approval by a Review Team.

New programs can only be *conditionally approved* for one to two years or *denied approval* by the Review Team. New programs cannot receive full approval until the end of a two-year period.

The steps an institution must undergo to receive approval for new educator preparation programs are described below. (Further information on the VSBPE's policy for new programs can be found in Appendix F.)

II. Steps for Attaining Program Approval

Step 1: Create Design Document

The Design Document should:

- Include background information on the institution proposing the new program, identify the endorsement area(s) to be addressed, offer a rationale, and provide a timeline for implementation.
- Provide documentation of progress existing programs have made toward addressing the concerns of the Review Team from the most recent program reviews. Pay special attention to programs under conditional approval.
- Offer a brief overview of the educator preparation curriculum and describe its alignment to the *Five Standards for Vermont Educators: A Vision for Schooling*, the *16 Principles for Vermont Educators*, and the endorsement requirements. Programs may do so by providing a detailed curriculum map.

Step 2: Request Visit

- Submit a letter from the institution's president to request the visit at least six months before the program review visit is to be conducted. Include the Design Document with this request.

Step 3: VSBPE Review

- Upon receipt of the request, the VSBPE will consider the Design Document and seek clarification from the institution, as needed, before approving a visit.

Step 4: Plan Visit

- The visit date will be established by the VTDOE in cooperation with the institution.
- The Review Team will be determined by the VTDOE and approved by the institution. The team will then be approved by the VSBPE.

- Review Team size depends on the number of licensing areas to be evaluated and is comprised of specialists in the endorsement area being sought.
- The team will include:
 - One member of the VSBPE
 - One member from an educator preparation institute
 - Two members at large
 - Additional members may be added to the team as needed.
- The institution should begin drafting the Institutional Portfolio addressing the seven program approval standards and indicators for the proposed program(s). **Please note: New programs are not required to address standard 4 as it necessitates evidence of candidate performance (e.g. evaluated portfolios, Praxis scores, etc.).**

Step 5: Submit an Institutional Portfolio

- At least two months prior to the scheduled visit, the Institutional Portfolio should be sent to the VTDOE and to members of the Review Team.
- The VTDOE reviews the Institutional Portfolio and makes one of the following determinations:
 - Not enough information was provided for the visit to take place
 - More information is needed prior to the visit
 - Visit is ready to take place

Step 6: Pre-Visit Conference

- Meet with representatives of the VTDOE and the team chair to coordinate visit details and review the Institutional Portfolio.
- Review agenda for visit.
- Confirm team accommodations and meals, as needed.

Step 7: Visit Is Conducted

- Visits typically last a day.
- The Review Team will collect evidence confirming the information provided in the Institutional Portfolio by conducting interviews of program and school based faculty, by possibly visiting potential field sites, by reviewing program notes, and by meeting with admissions and program administrators.
- The Team's decision to conditionally approve or deny the program will be communicated to the institution during the Exit Report.

Step 8: VSBPE Response

- The Report of the Review Team will be submitted to the institution for factual corrections.
- The institution will notify the ROPA Consultant if any corrections to the report are needed.
- Upon receipt of the final report, the institution must revise its Five-Year Plan and write its rejoinder (See Appendix F for a sample document.).
- Representatives of the institution will be invited to meet with the VSBPE Higher Education Committee.
- The VSBPE Higher Education Committee will review the plan, the report, and the rejoinder before making a final decision on program approval.
- VSBPE votes to accept the report of the Review Team.

III. Timeline for Adding New Programs

<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>
6 months prior to on-site visit	Written request for adding a new program and Design Document is sent to the Chair of the VSBPE and the ROPA consultant	President of the institution
8 weeks after request	Response to the institution and set date for on-site visit	VSBPE
12 weeks prior to on-site visit	Submit list of proposed members for Review Team to the institution	VSBPE
10 weeks prior to on-site visit	Deadline for any objections institution may have to Review Team composition	Institution
8 weeks prior to the on-site visit	Copies of the Institutional Portfolio sent to all members of the Review Team and a copy to the VTDOE	Institution
4-6 weeks prior to the on-site visit	Preliminary review of the Institutional Portfolio	Review Team
4 weeks prior to the on-site visit	Pre-visit meeting	Institution, Review Team Chair, ROPA Consultant
3 weeks prior to the on-site visit	Agenda sent for the visit, map, lodging information to Review Team members and VT DOE	Institution
4 weeks after visit	Draft of report sent to team members for feedback	Review Team Chair and ROPA Consultant
6 weeks after visit	Draft of report sent to the president of the institution for any factual corrections	ROPA Consultant
8 weeks after visit	VTDOE notified if any corrections to the report are needed	Institution
10 weeks after visit	Final Report to the institution	ROPA Consultant
14 weeks after visit	Institution Rejoinder sent to VSBPE	Institution
4 months after visit	VSBPE meets with Review Team member and representative of the institution to review report and rejoinder prior to issuing a final decision on program approval status	VSBPE